Claims:

1. A computing system including an email system connected to an email network using the SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol) protocol characterized in that the said system includes:
    -   means for the sender to specify alternate recipients of an email message to be used in case the mail system can not deliver the message to the original recipient,
    -   means for said email system to deliver the message to the specified alternate recipients in case it is unable to deliver to the original recipient.

2. A system as claimed in claim 1 wherein said means for the sender to specify the alternate recipient is by addition of ARCPT (Alternate Recipient) parameter in said SMTP protocol.

3. A system as claimed in claim 1 wherein said means for delivering the message to the specified alternate recipients is an extension to the SMTP server to include automatic forwarding of the message to the alternate recipients in case of inability to deliver to original recipients.

4. A system as claimed in claim 1 wherein said means for specifying the alternate recipient using the said ARCPT parameter can also be used by the recipient or the system administrator of the recipient server to forward emails to another address and alternate recipient on the recipient server shall hold priority over the one already in the email specified by the sender.

5.   A system as claimed in claim 1 further comprising:

-    means for the sender to specify notification by said email system of successful delivery to the alternate recipients on failure to deliver to original recipient,

-    means for said email system to notify the sender based on the delivery of the message to the alternate recipients.

6.   A system as claimed in claim 5 wherein said means for the sender to specify the notification is by addition of ALTERNATE keyword to the NOTIFY parameter.

7.   A system as claimed in claim 5 wherein said means for the said email system to notify the sender is an extension of the SMTP server to include sending of an email message to the sender in case of non-delivery of the message to the alternate recipients.

8.   A system as claimed in claim 5 wherein said extended SMTP protocol includes:

-    ARCPT keyword for specifying alternate recipients,

-    ALTERNATE keyword in the NOTIFY parameter, for specifying notification in case of delivery to alternate recipients.

9.   In a computing system including an email system connected to an email network using the SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol) protocol, a method for specifying alternate email recipients comprising:

-    specification of alternate recipients by the sender of an email message

to be used in case the mail system can not deliver the message to the original recipient,

- delivery of the message to the specified alternate recipients by the email system in case it is unable to deliver to the original recipient.

10. A method as claimed in claim 9 wherein said specification of the alternate recipient is by ARCPT (Alternate Recipient) parameter in said SMTP protocol.

11. A method as claimed in claim 9 wherein said delivery of the message to the specified alternate recipients is an extension to the SMTP server to include automatic forwarding of the message to the alternate recipients in case of inability to deliver to original recipients.

12. A method as claimed in claim 9 wherein said specification of the alternate recipient using said ARCPT parameter can also be provided by the recipient or the system administrator of the recipient server to forward emails to another address and alternate recipient on the recipient server shall hold priority over the one already in the email specified by the sender.

13. A method as claimed in claim further comprising:

- specification by the sender of notification by said email system of the successful delivery to the alternate recipients on failure to deliver to original recipient,
- notification to the sender by the email system based on the non-delivery of the message to the alternate recipients.

14.   A method as claimed in claim 13 wherein said specification of the notification is by addition of ALTERNATE keyword to the NOTIFY parameter.

5   15.   A method as claimed in claim 13 wherein said notification to the sender is by an extension of the SMTP server to include sending of an email message to the sender in case of non-delivery of the message to the alternate recipients.

16.   A method as claimed in claim 13 further comprising:

10   -   ARCPT keyword for specifying alternate recipients,

-   ALTERNATE keyword in the NOTIFY parameter, for specifying notification in case of delivery to alternate recipients.

17.   A computer program product comprising computer readable program code

15   stored on computer readable storage medium embodied therein for causing a computer to send email to alternate email recipients in case of inability to deliver to original recipient comprising

-   computer readable program code means configured for enabling the sender to specify alternate recipients of an email message to be used in

20   case the mail system can not deliver the message to the original recipient,

-   computer readable program code means configured for causing the said email system to deliver the message to the specified alternate recipients in case it is unable to deliver to the original recipient.

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18. A computer program product as claimed in claim 17 wherein said computer readable program code means configured for specifying the alternate recipient is by addition of ARCPT (Alternate Recipient) parameter in said SMTP protocol.

19. A computer program product as claimed in claim 17 wherein said computer readable program code means configured for delivering the message to the specified alternate recipients is an extension to the SMTP server to include automatic forwarding of the message to the alternate recipients in case of not delivering to original recipients.

20. A computer program product as claimed in claim 17 wherein said computer readable program code means configured for enabling the recipient or system administrator of the recipient server to specify an alternate email address using ARCPT parameter to forward emails to another address with the alternate recipient on the recipient server holding priority over the one already in the email specified by the sender.

21. A computer program product as claimed in claim 17 further comprising:
    -    computer readable program code means configured for enabling the sender to specify notification by said email system of the successful delivery to the alternate recipients on failure to deliver to original recipient,
    -    computer readable program code means configured for causing said email system notify the sender based on the non-delivery of the message to the alternate recipients.

22. A computer program product as claimed in claim 21 wherein said computer readable program code means configured for specifying the notification is by addition of ALTERNATE keyword to the NOTIFY parameter.

23. A computer program product as claimed in claim 21 wherein said computer readable program code means configured for notify the sender is an extension of the SMTP server to include sending of an email message to the sender in case of non-delivery of the message to the alternate recipients.

24. A computer program product as claimed in claim 21 further comprising:
    - ARCPT keyword for specifying alternate recipients,
    - ALTERNATE keyword in the NOTIFY parameter, for specifying notification in case of delivery to alternate recipients.